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Hot Off the Press: Excerpts from New Go Books

All About Ko

Mastering the Basics, Volume 6

by Rob van Zeijst and Richard Bozulich

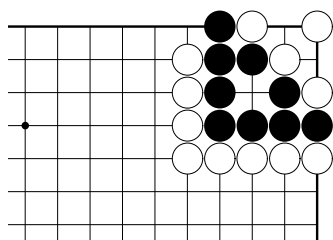
published by Kiseido

The latest volume in this series presents an exhaustive analysis of all aspects of ko: from the most basic points to the most esoteric. It covers the various types of ko, techniques for creating a

ko, and how to evaluate ko threats. The latter two thirds of the book consists of 122 problems and 11 example games. The discussion of these is very thorough. This is a book for serious students of the game.

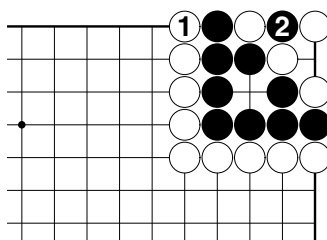
Here's a sample from the book:

Problem 1

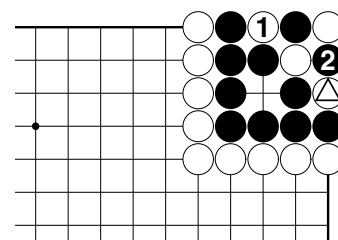


What is the status of the white stones in the corner?

Answer to Problem 1

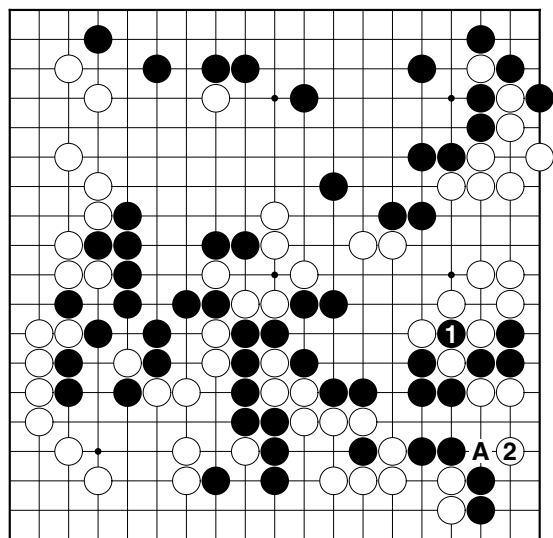


Dia. 1. Double ko



Dia. 2. Unlimited ko threats

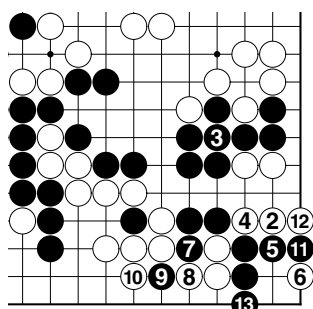
The black stones are alive because of a double ko. However, once White plays 1 in *Dia. 1*, Black must capture with 2 to get out of atari. If a ko is being fought elsewhere, White has unlimited ko threats. That is, White can play 1 in *Dia. 2* as a ko threat. Black is in atari, so he will answer with 2. White has another ko threat when he captures at the marked stone. At the end of the game, Black can remove any remaining white stones from the board.



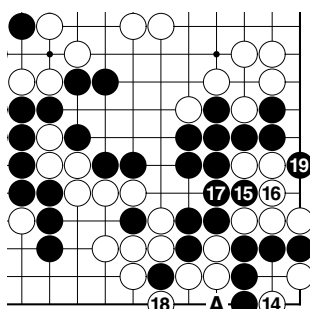
Problem 78

Black to play

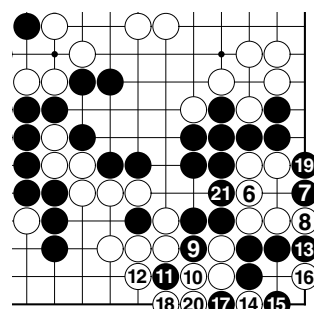
After Black captures the ko with 1, White jumps to 2, threatening to cut at A. How should Black answer White's threat?



Dia. 1. Correct



Dia. 2. Continuation



Dia. 3. Variation

White 2 in *Dia. 1* is an ineffective ko threat. Black should resolve the ko by connecting with 3. If White cuts with 4, Black will block with 5. White 6 is the tesuji for attacking this black shape, but Black cuts through with 7 and 9, then descends to 11 and 13. The life of the black stones now depends on the outcome of a capturing race between them and the five white stones above.

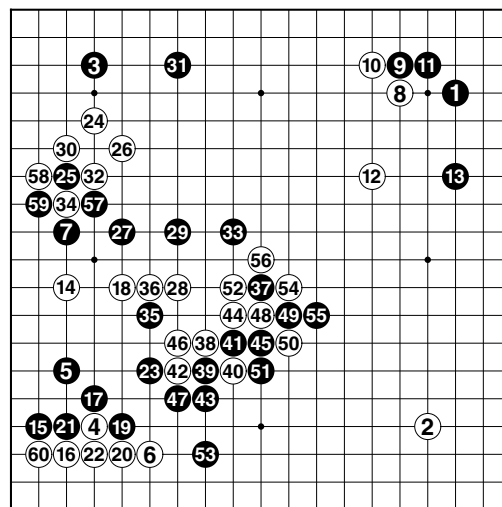
White starts by filling one of Black's liberties with 14 in *Dia. 2*. White wedges in with 15. White atari with 16 and Black connects with 17. White would like to atari at A, but he must first capture with 18, so Black can atari with 19, winning the capturing race by one move.

White might also resist with 6 in *Dia. 3*. Black would first make a placement with 7, cut through with 9 and 11, then block with 13. The sequence to 21 is inevitable, and Black again wins the capturing race.

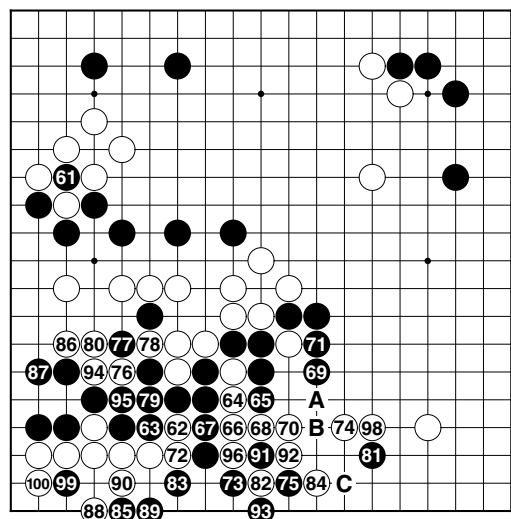
Example Game Four

The game in *Dia. 1* was played in the 19th Fujitsu Cup on June 6, 2006 between Yi Ch'ang-ho (Black) and Yi Se-tol. The moves through 50 are relatively uneventful except we can already spot the emergence of a ko starting with White 34. Black 53 is a flexible move, but it allows White to capture with 54 and 56. Black 57 and 59 reinforce Black's center group while weakening White's group in the upper left and they prevent White from linking up underneath below 59. White 60 is an interesting move for our study of ko. Of course White will not connect at 25 — that would show a lack of fighting spirit. However, letting Black win the ko without any resistance is not good either.

White 60 eliminates a lot of black ko threats in the lower left; it is a way of preparing for the ko while taking territory as well.



Dia. 1 (1-60)



Dia. 2 (61-100)

White 62 in *Dia. 2* was an unexpected assault and immediately led to a perilous fight that became more urgent than the ko at 61. The moves through 71 are a one-way street. Although Black A is the shape move, Black 71 is better because it offers White fewer forcing moves. Moreover, Black A would force White B and leave White with no room for error. (You always want your opponent to have plenty of room for errors.)

With 73 and 75, Black's position has become too low. Next, a move at Black C would be safe, but to elevate his position, Black extends to 81. The game immediately goes into high gear when White plays 82. Black 83 is a clever move. If White blocks to the left of it, Black connects his stones with 84. By the end of this diagram, both the black and white groups in the lower left lack eyes.